

Defense Media Merit Awards

Nomination Guide for Calendar Year 2024

Program administered by:

Defense Media Activity

6700 Taylor Ave

Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755

DefenseMediaAwards@mail.mil



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY
6700 TAYLOR AVENUE, SUITE 5902
FORT MEADE, MD 20755

November 4, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMUNICATION DIRECTORS, DEFENSE AGENCIES
COMMUNICATION DIRECTORS, DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES
COMMUNICATION DIRECTORS, COMBATANT COMMANDS
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU PUBLIC AFFAIRS
COMPONENT AND STAFF DIRECTORS, DEFENSE MEDIA
ACTIVITY

SUBJECT: Request for Nominations to the 2024 Defense Media Merit Awards

This memorandum is the call for nominations to the 2024 Defense Media Merit Awards competition. Winners in the of-the-year categories will compete in the DoD Media Awards competition.

Federal civilian employees assigned to Defense Agencies, DoD Field Activities, and Combatant Commands are invited to submit their work.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Chad McMeen at (443) 801-7824 or chad.e.mcmeen@mail.mil. Thank you for your support.

Max D. Lederer, Jr.
Acting Director

Defense Media Merit Awards

Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2024

Table of Contents

I.	ABOUT THE AWARDS PROGRAM	3
II.	POINT OF CONTACT	3
III.	MILESTONES.....	4
IV.	ELIGIBILITY	5
V.	ENTRY CRITERIA	5
VI.	ENTRY DISQUALIFICATION AND REJECTION	7
VII.	HOW TO SUBMIT ENTRIES	7
VIII.	AWARDS	8
IX.	NOTIFICATION OF WINNERS	8
X.	AFTER-ACTION REVIEW / MEDIA AWARDS GOVERNANCE	8
XI.	JUDGING GUIDANCE	8
XII.	CATEGORIES.....	9
	A. General Information.....	9
	B. Communicator of the Year.....	10
	C. Graphic Design.	10
	D. Photo	12
	E. Print.....	14
	F. Video.....	15
	Appendix A, Federal Laws and DoD Policy	18
	Appendix B, Policy Review Checklist.....	19

I. ABOUT THE AWARDS PROGRAM

- A. The Defense Media Merit Awards (DMMA) program recognizes excellence among *U.S. government civilian* broadcast journalists, graphic artists, journalists, photographers, public affairs practitioners, mass communication specialists and videographers assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity. It also fosters an environment of innovation and growth, leading to more effective communication programs. The competition is administered by the Defense Media Activity..
- B. The DMMA competition and the guidance contained in this document also provides a competitive pathway for U.S. government civilian employees assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity, to submit their work for judging as potential entries into the DoD Media Awards competition.
- C. Military members assigned to the combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity, submit their work to their respective Service competition.

II. POINT OF CONTACT

For information regarding entry requirements, email the DMMA contest coordinator, Mr. Chad McMeen, at chad.e.mcmeen.civ@mail.mil or call (443) 801-7824.

III. MILESTONES

2024

January 1	Program year began
November 1	Submission window opens
December 31	Program year ends

2025

February 12	Deadline to enter the DMMA competition.
March 3-7	DMMA entries judged
March 19	DMMA winners announced. Winning entries submitted to the DoD Media Awards competition.
June 4	Conduct DMMA After Action with each Agency and Activity contest coordinator

IV. ELIGIBILITY

- A. U.S. government civilian employees assigned to combatant commands, defense agencies and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity, with the photographer, journalist, photojournalist, videographer, broadcast journalist, graphic designer, communication, public affairs or equivalent occupation series are eligible to enter the competition.
- B. Products created with contributions from military members, contractor employees or other U.S. government employees are allowed, but they must not have been created as part of a contract or by a team comprised exclusively of contract employees. Contractors' contribution to any product must be less than 50 percent of the total submission.
- C. Military members assigned to the combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity, are ineligible to enter their individual work products to the DMMA competition. They must submit their individual work to their respective Service competition.
- D. Army and Air National Guard members assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies and DoD field activities enter their individual work products through the National Guard Bureau.
- E. Employees who leave U.S. government service during the year may NOT enter the competition.
- F. Personnel assigned to the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Civil Air Patrol are prohibited from competing unless they meet the eligibility criteria stated above.
- G. Military, civilian and contract personnel assigned to "Stars and Stripes" newspapers are not eligible to participate. All non-appropriated fund productions and personnel are also ineligible.
- H. Employees of another nation, commonly referred to as local national employees, are not eligible to compete in the DMMA competition. Products produced with their assistance are eligible for unit categories. However, they will not be recognized individually and must contribute less than 50 percent of the total submission. Units up to the MAJCOM level can use the DVIDS awards portal for local national employee competition. Those entries must not flow up to the DMMA or DoD competitions.
- I. Government contractor employees are not authorized to compete in any individual category.

V. ENTRY CRITERIA

- A. All products entering the competition must have been created to support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and must meet the highest standards of

production, execution and professional excellence. Products must convey, by content and delivery, relevant information that supports that command's information and/or mission needs and, therefore, must be authorized products approved for public release.

- B. Entries also must have been created, approved for public release, and published to the Defense Visual Information Distribution System (DVIDS) between 12:01 am Eastern Standard Time on Jan. 1, 2024 and 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on Dec. 31, 2024.
- C. Civilian enterprise guides and directories, yearbooks, cruise books, and products produced using non-appropriated funds are not eligible to compete.
- D. All still and motion imagery (photos and videos), and graphic products will contain embedded captions and other required metadata, and will be assigned a Visual Information Record Identification Number (VIRIN) as instructed in the DoD Visual Information Style Guide dated July 16, 2019 and Change 2 to DoDI 5040.02, "Visual Information," dated April 23, 2019.
- E. All entries must comply with federal law and DoD policy. For a complete list, see Appendix A (and use the Policy Checklist in Appendix B).
- F. Each combatant command, defense agency, and DoD field activity (except for the Defense Media Activity, see paragraphs G, and I in this section), may enter no more than three entries per category listed in Section XIII. ***Each entry must be from a different competitor.*** The DoD of-the-year categories, however, are limited to one nomination.
- G. Each U.S. government civilian employee assigned to the Defense Media Activity may submit one entry per individual category listed in Section XIII.
- H. The DMMA competition is one of six competitions eligible to submit entries to the DoD-level DoD Media Awards. The DMMA competition may submit only one entry to each of-the-year category.
- I. **No single product may be entered in more than one category.** In addition, individual components (graphics, photos, video, etc.) of a multimedia product, picture story, or photojournalism entry may not be entered into other categories as these items were created for the overall product, not for individual use.
- J. The Communicator of the Year category is open to U.S. government civilian personnel assigned to combatant commands, defense agencies, and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity, as long as they meet eligibility criteria listed in Section IV, paragraph A. Entrants may enter multiple of-the-year categories (communicator, graphic designer, photographer, videographer or writer of the year categories) during the same competition year. Since military members assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies, and DoD field activities must compete in their Service competition, entries received from military members for this category in the DMMA competition will be rejected.

- K. Each graphic, photo or video product must contain an embedded caption and other required metadata. Also assign a Visual Information Record Identification Number (VIRIN) as required in the [DoD Visual Information Style Guide](#) and Change 2 to [DoD Instruction 5040.02](#), “Visual Information,” dated April 23, 2018. Captions for products released from operational areas of responsibility will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Partial or condensed captions may be allowed if directed by the release authority or higher headquarters within the operational command. While editing metadata during upload to DVIDS, list the person who created the product in the credit field and ensure their name is included in the caption.

VI. ENTRY DISQUALIFICATION AND REJECTION

- A. Products entered by personnel who do not meet eligibility requirements listed in Section IV will be disqualified.
- B. ***Individual products with more than one name in a byline or credit line will be disqualified.***
- C. Unit products entered in individual categories will be disqualified. Individual products containing a DVIAN will also be disqualified.
- D. Products that do not meet the specific category requirements listed in Section XIII or that fail to follow federal law or established DoD policy will be disqualified.
- E. Products that do not reach the contest coordinator by the deadlines listed in Section III will be disqualified.
- F. Challenges in judging will be decided by the Defense Media Activity director or the director’s designee.
- G. DVIDS media competition submission requirements enforce as much objective criteria as possible and will prohibit the submitter from a successful submission if errors are found using automation checks. Therefore, it is the entrant’s responsibility to ensure the product is uploaded and published to DVIDS correctly. ***Entries not uploaded or published to DVIDS as required in the category descriptions will be disqualified.***

VII. HOW TO SUBMIT ENTRIES

- A. Upload and publish products to DVIDS at <https://www.dvidshub.net/>. Once logged in, go to the training section for upload instructions. Publishing graphics after they have been uploaded requires extra steps; refer to the DVIDS website for instructions.
- B. Select products using the DVIDS Awards interface module under the Admin Portal. Instructions may be found on the DVIDS website. Entries must be submitted through the DVIDS Awards interface module to enter the competition. Requests for exceptions to this rule will be denied.

- C. The entry submitter may NOT select their own entry as the winner. This second step must be done by a supervisor or third party and they must certify the entry meets eligibility. This separation rule also applies to entries submitted on behalf of a content producer.

VIII. AWARDS

- A. DMMA awards will be given to U.S. government civilians competing in 23 individual award categories: Communicator of the Year, five graphic design, six photo, five print, seven video. First-, second- and third-place awards will be given in all individual categories except for the of-the-year categories. Only one person will receive an award in each of-the-year category.
 - 1. First-place individual award winners will receive plaques and certificates.
 - 2. Second- and third-place individual award winners will receive certificates.
 - 3. No award will be made if the judges deem that no one entry meets program standards. No honorable mentions will be awarded.
- B. Individual awards are for products created by a single person who performed a majority of the work. Photos or graphics must not contain signatures, logos or markings of any kind on the image.

IX. NOTIFICATION OF WINNERS

- A. The combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies, and DoD field activities who submitted entries to the DMMA competition will be notified of the winners and will be responsible for notifying the winners. The National Guard Bureau will also be notified so they may notify the winners.
- B. Winning entries will be announced via the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service website at <https://www.dvidshub.net/awards/dma> after entries have been submitted to the DoD Media Awards program.

X. AFTER-ACTION REVIEW / MEDIA AWARDS GOVERNANCE

The Defense Media Activity will host a DoD Media Awards Governance Committee meeting June 10 or 11, 2025, with the Services' appointed voting members and National Guard Bureau advisers to review and update competition guidance for the 2024 award cycle. The DMMA contest coordinator will attend to provide feedback in a non-voting capacity. A DMMA contest after action will be held June 4, 2025 with the designated coordinators for participating Agencies and Activities.

XI. JUDGING GUIDANCE

- A. Judging will occur March 3-7, 2025.

- B. Judges will be assigned and coordinated by DMMA contest coordinator. The coordinator will ensure judges provide feedback for each entry. Comments from the judges will be available in the DVIDS awards module for supervisors to download and share with entrants.
- C. A panel of three judges will be selected for each medium (graphic design, photography, print and video). Selection criteria for judges will be based on their professional experience in the communication and visual information fields. The lead judge for each panel will not be a Defense Media Activity staff member.
- D. Judges will select only one winner in each category. If no entry in a category is considered within contest standards, judges may choose to withhold any award within that category.
- E. An entrant of a category may NOT be a judge in the same category. When practical, supervisors may NOT be a judge of a category in which subordinates have entered.
- F. All entries will be judged on professional excellence, originality, storytelling ability and creativity.
- G. Judging at all levels will use the below weighted rubric within the DVIDS system.

Category	Weighted Score	Rating	Score
Professional Excellence	40%	★★★★★★★★★★ 0	0.00
Communication Impact	35%	★★★★★★★★★★ 0	0.00
Originality / Military Relevance	15%	★★★★★★★★★★ 0	0.00
Caption / Description	10%	★★★★★★★★★★ 0	0.00
			Total: 0

- H. Captions for products released from operational areas of responsibility should be carefully reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Partial or condensed captions may be allowed if directed by the release authority or higher headquarters within the operational command.

XII. CATEGORIES

A. General Information.

1. The 23 individual categories listed include five categories eligible to enter the DoD Media Awards competition: Communicator of the Year, Civilian Graphic Designer of the Year, Civilian Photographer of the Year, Thomas Jefferson Civilian Writer of the Year and Civilian Videographer of the Year.

2. U.S. government civilian employees assigned to combatant commands, defense agencies and DoD field activities, including Defense Media Activity U.S. government civilians assigned to the Air Force, Army, Navy and Marine Corps production divisions, enter their individual work to the **individual** categories.
 3. Refer to Section IV of these instructions for eligibility information and Section V for entry criteria.
- B. **Communicator of the Year.** Candidates must submit a **portfolio** consisting of **five** examples of their work. Entry must be a portfolio profiling the work credited to one individual.

Portfolio must contain the following clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:

- One print story (Must be either a commentary, feature story, information story or one stories of a series)
- One video story
- One photo (Must be either a news photo, feature photo, portrait or one photo from a photo series.)
- Two products of the candidate's choice (Must not be a photo series.)

Follow entry criteria listed in Section V. Each product must follow the rules listed in the category descriptions.

If electing to enter a photojournalism entry as a candidate's choice, it must be the entire package (story and 3-5 photos) and it must be on a topic different from other products in the portfolio. Only one photojournalism product may be entered as part of the portfolio.

Upload each element of the portfolio as a separate product in DVIDS, and then follow the submission instructions to complete the portfolio.

Do not extract and submit component elements of a product as a candidate's choice if that product in its entirety is being submitted by the entrant to this or another category. For example, do not extract and submit a logo or other graphic from a multimedia product if the entire multimedia product is being submitted as a candidate's choice to this or another category.

Submit entry as a **portfolio** with the DVIDS Awards interface module.

Award Type: Individual.

- C. **Graphic Design.** Products must contain embedded captions and other required metadata, including a VIRIN. In addition, products must support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and be authorized products approved for public release. Products that do not follow these requirements will be disqualified. **Ineligible:** two-dimensional work created by free-hand methods using dry- or wet-based methods, such as line art, sketches, water colors and oil paintings, and work created using pencil, chalk and charcoal; pictures of displays; photo illustrations, and fine art pieces.

1. Digital Art. This category is for original work created by digital means. Examples of work accepted in this category are digital paintings, vector art, and 3-D renderings. A hand-drawn sketch, which is then digitized, may be used as the starting point, but these marks may not be visible in the final product. ***Ineligible:*** animation, cartoons, comic strips, and still photographs enhanced by digital means. Within the caption, explain why the product was created, how it was used and the meaning/purpose of each composite element within the design. Upload entry in DVIDS as a high-resolution file.
Award type: Individual.
2. Identity Design. This category includes original work that represents a logo or crest that was used in some kind of official military capacity. Examples include unit coin designs, team logos and unit crests. ***An entry entered in the Digital Art category cannot be entered in this category.*** Unit crests must have been registered with the appropriate office of heraldry prior to entry. Entrant must be prepared to provide proof of registration. Within the caption, explain why the product was created, how it was used and the meaning/purpose of each composite element within the design. Upload entry in DVIDS as a high-resolution file.
Award Type: Individual.
3. Layout and Design. This category is for single-page or double-truck layouts created using elements from various sources. Examples include info charts, info graphics, flyers, certificates, CD covers, cover art, and posters. All layout and design work must be completed by the entrant, but elements can come from other sources. Entry is limited to two pages that may be extracted from a larger work published between Jan. 1, 2023 and Dec. 31, 2023. Layouts from interactive publications or interactive PDF documents are **not** allowed. **An entry created and entered in the Digital Art category cannot enter this category.** For example, adding elements to a Digital Art entry and submitting it as a Layout and Design entry. **Using a Digital Art entry as part of the layout is also not permitted.** Upload entry to DVIDS as a high-resolution file.
Award Type: Individual.
4. Animation. Products include various media components that allow for animation, such as video production elements, digital displays, web animations or info graphics. Productions must not use any copyrighted materials, such as movie clips and sound bites or music without broadcast rights. Any animation style is allowed, such as 2-D, 2.5-D, 3-D, or stop motion. Products will be judged on the use of cleverness to convey information, entertainment value and evidence of animation skill. Do not submit copyrighted rigs, props or characters. Within the caption, explain why the product was created and how it was used such as a broadcast product, video production, or web element. Animation created and used as a part of another entry, such as a video product or multimedia story, may not be entered. Upload entry to DVIDS as a high-resolution MP4 or SVG file using the graphics upload portal.
Award Type: Individual.

5. Civilian Graphic Designer of the Year. Candidates must submit an entry consisting of **six products** from the graphic design categories with at least one from each of the following categories: Digital Art, Identity Design, and Layout and Design. Each product must contain a caption and have its own VIRIN.

Other requirements:

- Follow entry criteria listed in Section V.
- Submit entry as a collection within the DVIDS Awards interface module.
- Do not submit two-dimensional work created by free-hand methods using dry- or wet-based methods, such as line art, sketches, water colors and oil paintings, and work created using pencil, chalk and charcoal: pictures of displays; and fine art pieces.
- Do not extract and submit component elements of a multimedia product, video story or video spot as one of the six graphic design products if the multimedia product, video story or video spot in its entirety is being submitted by the entrant to another category. This does not prohibit individuals from extracting a graphic element they created for a team produced product or a product credited to another individual.
- Do not extract elements from a layout and design product as a separate product. Conversely, do not enter a layout and design product that contains elements submitted into the digital art and identity design categories. Each product must be a separate and distinct from the other.
- Do not submit layouts from interactive publications or interactive PDF documents.

Submit entry as a **collection** in the DVIDS Awards module interface.

Award Type: Individual.

- D. **Photo**. All products will contain embedded captions and other required metadata, including a VIRIN. Refer to the [DoD Visual Information Style Guide](#) for specific details. In addition, all products must support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and be authorized products approved for release. Photo illustrations are ineligible to compete in any of the photo categories. Those that do not follow these requirements will be disqualified.

1. Photo Series. A series of at least seven, but no more than 12 uncontrolled action photos that depict a military or military-related storyline or theme, including a military operation or contingency, or participation in a military exercise or training events. Photos may depict one particular aspect of an operation or the entire event. Do not submit a composite layout. Entrants electing to enter photos from the series to the portfolio categories may not enter the remaining photos in any other category. Upload each photo separately in DVIDS as a high-resolution file, each with its own VIRIN, and then submit the items as a **collection** within DVIDS.

Award Type: Individual.

2. Picture Story. A series of at least seven, but no more than 12 photos that depict a military or military-related storyline or theme that does not meet the criteria specified in Photo Series category. Controlled and uncontrolled action photos are acceptable. Do not submit a composite layout. Entrants electing to enter photos from the Picture Story series to the portfolio categories may not enter the remaining photos in any other category. Upload each photo separately in DVIDS as a high-resolution file, each with its own VIRIN, and then submit the items as a **collection** within DVIDS.
Award Type: Individual.
3. News Photo. Scheduled or unscheduled news event featuring a military organization, employees, equipment or family members. Upload entry in DVIDS as a high-resolution file.
Award Type: Individual.
4. Feature Photo. Storytelling picture not news related; usually a situation that has strong human interest or a fresh view of a commonplace occurrence featuring a military organization, military equipment, employees, or family members. Upload entry in DVIDS as a high-resolution file.
Award Type: Individual.
5. Portrait. A picture of a person that identifies and captures the essence of that person's character and depicts his or her personality. Only one person may be portrayed in the photo. Official photos are not allowed. Upload entry in DVIDS as a high-resolution file.
Award Type: Individual.
6. Civilian Photographer of the Year. Candidates must submit a portfolio consisting of *seven examples* of their work from the photography categories. The portfolio must contain the following each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:
 - One news photo
 - One feature photo
 - One portrait
 - Three photos of the candidate's choice
 - One photo series that consists of at least seven, but no more than 12 photos. Series can be a Picture Story. Do not submit a composite layout.

Entry will consist of 13 to 18 images in total.

Do not submit the same photo more than once in the portfolio. For example, candidates entering Picture Story as their series entry may not use one of these images as their news or feature photo, portrait or as one of their candidate's choice entries. This does not prohibit photographers from using a different photo from that same operation as their news, feature or photographer's choice photos. Note, however, that the purpose of the portfolio is to demonstrate one's ability to take photos in a variety of settings. Therefore, photos taken from more than one operation or event may earn higher scores.

Portfolio may **not** include Photojournalism or Multimedia Story entries, and will include only one photo series.

Do not extract photos from a multimedia product or other video product and enter them as a portrait, news photo, feature photo or candidate's choice photo if the multimedia product or video is submitted in its entirety to another category. Upload each photo separately in DVIDS as a high-resolution file, each with its own VIRIN, and then group the photos for the series entry as a collection prior to creating the portfolio entry.

Submit entry as a **portfolio** in the DVIDS Awards interface module.

Award Type: Individual.

E. **Print.**

1. Information Story. A story that conveys information while answering the five W's (who, what, where, when, why) and H (how). It can be written in different shapes and forms, including the Inverted Pyramid, Kabob/Wall Street Journal Style, Hour/Martini Glass, and Question and Answer. News and sports stories are allowed.

Upload entry to DVIDS as a story with or without photos. Photos will not be judged.

Photos uploaded with the story to DVIDS may be submitted in the News Photo, Feature Photo or Portrait categories as appropriate since they are not being judged, but they may not be used in the Photo Series, Picture Story or Photojournalism categories.

Award Type: Individual.

2. Feature Story. Feature story must have a focus that is maintained and supported throughout. Entry may be a sports, human interest, personality or news feature.

Upload entry to DVIDS as a story with or without photos. Photos will not be judged.

Photos uploaded with the story to DVIDS may be submitted in the News Photo, Feature Photo or Portrait categories as appropriate since they are not being judged, but they may not be used in the Photo Series, Picture Story or Photojournalism categories.

Award Type: Individual.

3. Commentary. A commentary is an article that conveys the writer's opinion on a topic as specified in DoDI 5120.04. Ghost-written commentaries and those written by commanders or those in a leadership position are ineligible. Commentaries posted to an official military website are eligible as are commentaries published in a command newspaper, magazine or newsletter.

Upload entry to DVIDS as a story with or without photos. Photos will not be judged.

Photos uploaded with the commentary to DVIDS may be submitted in the News Photo, Feature Photo or Portrait categories as appropriate since they are not being

judged. They may not be used in the Photo Series, Picture Story or Photojournalism categories.

Award Type: Individual.

4. Photojournalism. Entries must include a story and at least three, but no more than five photographs with embedded captions. All elements will be judged. Photos and story must be on the same topic. Story and photos must be the work of one individual.

Upload entry to DVIDS as a story with photos included.

Award Type: Individual.

5. Civilian Writer of the Year. Candidates must submit *five* writing examples: one information story, one feature story, and three stories of the candidate's choice.). All entries must be from separate events.

Do not submit a photojournalism product in its entirety as a candidate's choice; submit only the story. However, do not submit a story from a photojournalism product if the entire photojournalism product is being entered into the Communicator of the Year category.

Upload each article as a separate story in DVIDS.

Submit entry as a **collection** within the DVIDS Awards interface module.

Award Type: Individual.

- F. **Video**. All products will contain required metadata, including a VIRIN. They must also support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and be approved for release. Slates are not required and should not be included. However, slate information may be useful when completing the metadata fields, including the caption field, upon file upload to DVIDS. **Those that do not follow these requirements will be disqualified.**

Note the use of the words "caption" and "captioning" is not the same as "closed caption" or "closed captioning."

A caption is used to describe who is profiled in the product, what happened, and where and when it happened. The caption also explains why the event took place: the purpose of the event. It is added to the product's metadata upon upload to DVIDS. Refer to the [DoD Visual Information Style Guide](#) for specific information.

A closed caption (or closed captioning) is used to display the audio portion of a television program or video product as text on the screen for individuals who are deaf or partially deaf.

Video products submitted to the media awards competition may contain closed captions, but they are not required. However, a caption in the metadata field is required.

1. B-roll. A video on the same or military-related theme. Must be the work of one individual in its entirety. Do not include reporter standups, narration or music bed. Natural sound is allowed and encouraged. An interview with a subject matter expert may be included; however, the interview may not be used in the sound bed

throughout. Some of the footage may also be used to create an entry for the Multimedia Product, Video Story or Video Series produced by the same individual. Submit as one file. Total run time must be 5 minutes or less. Ensure video contains the required metadata, including a VIRIN, then upload to DVIDS.

Award Type: Individual.

2. Multimedia Product. Entry must illustrate the use of visual storytelling techniques across multiple digital mediums while telling a story. Must have military or DoD relevance. All forms of media are allowed: audio, video, photography, graphics, animation, design or any other visual tool. Must use a minimum of three elements. May be a feature, personality or news journalism piece. Entry may not include dramatization. An entry is defined as a single story produced and edited by one individual with at least 51 percent of the story's content created by that individual. Total run time must be 5 minutes or less. Entry will be judged by the quality of storytelling and creative use of combined mediums. Upload entry in DVIDS.
Award Type: Individual.
3. Video Story. May be a feature, personality or news journalism piece. Story must have military or DoD relevance. Entrant must have contributed at least 51 percent of the footage with the remainder coming from any other non-copyrighted source. Footage from the entry submitted for b-roll category may be used. Entrant must have performed all the editing. Appropriate effects, fades or wipes are allowed. Natural sound, music and voice-over narration may be used. Reporter stand-ups are allowed but not required. Total run time must be 5 minutes or less. Upload entry in DVIDS.
Award Type: Individual.
4. Video Spot. Entries must be one spot 60 seconds or less in length. Must be the work of one individual in its entirety (planned, filmed and edited). The target audience must be identified in the caption. Upload entry in DVIDS.
Award Type: Individual.
5. Video Series. A sequence of videos on a common military-related theme. Entry must include two, but no more than four video stories dealing with a common theme. The series must have been planned in advance as a sequence of videos and each video must be clearly identified as part of a series with either an anchor lead, or a consistent opening and closing. For example, this video is the first (second, third, or fourth) in a series of four videos about <topic>. Entrant must have contributed at least 51 percent of the footage with the remainder coming from any other non-copyrighted source. Entrant must have performed all the editing. Appropriate effects, fades or wipes are allowed. Natural sound, music and voice-over narration may be used. Each video in the series must be 5 minutes or less in duration. Reporter stand-ups are allowed but not required. Upload each video as a separate file in DVIDS, ensuring each video contains the required metadata, including a VIRIN. Upload entry in DVIDS as a **collection**.
Award Type: Individual.

6. Civilian Videographer of the Year. Candidates must submit an entry consisting of four examples of their work.

Entry must contain ***four*** video products each clearly labeled for the judges when submitting:

- One B-roll video
- One video story
- Two products of the candidate's choice, either a video story, multimedia product, video spot or one video from a video series. A video designed exclusively for use on a social media platform may also be entered as a candidate's choice.

Other requirements:

- A B-roll video may not be submitted as a candidate's choice.
- Each video product must be 5 minutes or less in duration.
- Portfolio in its entirety must not exceed 20 minutes.
- Slates are not required and should not be included.
- Videos may contain closed captions, but they are not required.

Submit entry as a **collection** within the DVIDS Awards interface module.

Award Type: Individual.

Appendix A, Federal Laws and DoD Policy

1. All products must comply with applicable laws and DoD policy, including copyright and intellectual property laws and regulations, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Information regarding copyright and intellectual property laws may be found at www.copyright.gov. HIPPA information may be found at www.hhs.gov.
2. Productions containing commercial music must conform to U.S. copyright laws. This generally includes synchronization rights obtained via a music license agency. Otherwise, military units must obtain written approval from the artist, musicians' union and/or record company, to include synchronization rights. Rights obtained for commercial music used in productions submitted to the DoD Media Awards contest must include unlimited distribution. Individually or personally purchased licenses are not authorized. Organizations may be asked to provide written confirmation that all music complies with copyright law and DoD standards.
3. All products must meet the requirements for public affairs release as stated in Change 1 of [DoD Instruction 5230.29](#), "Security and Policy Review of Information for Public Release," dated April 14, 2017. Any questions regarding public release should be directed to the local public affairs office.
4. Printed and PDF publications must conform to DoD Instruction 5120.04, "DoD Newspapers, Magazines, Guides, and Installation Maps," dated November 20, 2017.
5. Graphics, photos and video products must conform to Change 2 of DoD Instruction 5040.02, "Visual Information," dated April 23, 2019 and include metadata in accordance with the [DoD Visual Information Style Guide](#) dated January 28, 2020.

Appendix B, Policy Review Checklist

The below Checklist will be used by contest submitters, supervisors and contest coordinators to ensure the products meet eligibility and follow DoD guidelines. Judges will be provided specific guidance via separate correspondence.

DoD VI Policy Compliance Checklist			
Use this checklist to verify a visual information (VI) product complies with DoD VI policy prior to upload to the Defense Visual Information Distribution System (DVIDS) and entry to the DoD Media Awards competition. Go to the reference listed for an explanation of each policy requirement. Legend: Pass: Complies with DoD VI policy. A-DQ: Automatic Disqualification (A-DQ) C-A: DoD will allow corrections. If none are made, points will be deducted. C-D: DoD will allow corrections. If none are made, entry will be automatically disqualified. VIRIN: Visual Information Record Identification Number			
Entry Requirements	Yes	No	Notes
1. Was the VI product produced and published to DVIDS in 2024? (DoD Media Awards Nomination Guidance)	Pass	A-DQ	Corrections not allowed.
2. Does the VI product have military or DoD relevance? (DoD Media Awards Nomination Guidance)	Pass	A-DQ	Corrections not allowed.
VIRIN Requirements	Yes	No	Notes
3. Does the Vision ID listed in the product's VIRIN match the individual listed in the credit line? (Page 23, DoDI 5040.02 .)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
4. Does the VIRIN contain the correct sequence number? (Page 24, DoDI 5040.02 .)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
5. Does the date in the VIRIN match the date in the caption? (Page 23, DoDI 5040.02 ; page 27, DoD Visual Information Style Guide)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
6. Does the DVIDS "Date Taken" field match the date in the VIRIN and the date listed in the caption? ("Date Shot" entry, Page 36, DoD Visual Information Style Guide)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
Caption Requirements	Yes	No	Notes

7. Does the caption answer the 5 Ws (who, what, when, where, and why)? (Pages 26-30, DoD Visual Information Style Guide)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
8. Is only one person listed in the caption's credit line? For the DoD Media Contest, only one person may be listed in the caption's credit line. (DoD Media Awards Nomination Guidance)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
9. Does the caption list the hometown and state of any person or persons identified in the VI product? ("Hometown" entry, page 7, DoD Visual Information Style Guide , and paragraph C4.2.2.5.2.1.14, pages 39-40, DoD 5400.11-R , "Department of Defense Privacy Program.")	Go to question 9.a	Pass	
9.a. Does the unit have <u>written</u> permission from the individual to publish their hometown and state? An individual's hometown and state may not be released to the public without their written consent. State alone, however, may be disclosed per DoD 5400.11-R .	Go to question 9.b	A-D	Corrections not allowed.
9.b. Was written permission obtained <u>before</u> the VI product was published to DVIDS? Disclosing an individual's hometown and state without their permission is a violation of the Privacy Act of 1974. Therefore, obtain written permission from the individual before uploading the VI product to DVIDS. Disclosing the state alone is authorized. Entrants must be prepared to provide written documentation when queried.	Pass ¹	A-D	Corrections not allowed.
Metadata Requirements	Yes	No	Notes
10. Is the correct location where the image was taken listed in the metadata? (City/Base/Location/Ship; State or Province; Country or Area) (Page 37, DoD Visual Information Style Guide)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
11. Do the release instructions include a release status? (Page 37, DoD Visual Information Style Guide)	Pass	See notes.	C-D

12. Do the release instructions include the release authority's name, duty position, phone number and/or email address? (Page 37, DoD Visual Information Style Guide)	Pass	See notes.	C-D
13. Does the VI product contain copyrighted material, including music and other proprietary information? (Page 16, DoDI 5040.07)	Go to question 14.	Pass	
14. Does the unit have <u>written</u> permission stating the organization and the DoD have permission to use the copyrighted material into perpetuity? A screenshot from the company's website is not adequate permission and will not be accepted. Note that a legal review by the entrant's legal office is also required per DoDI 5040.07 . Entrants must be prepared to provide this documentation when queried.	Pass ¹	A-DQ	DoD will not allow corrections.

¹ Entrants must provide documentation when queried. Entrants who fail to do so will have their entries disqualified.